

Name: Andy

Age: 28

Condition: Spinal Cord Injury

Andy suffered a level C4/5 spinal cord injury as a result of diving accident.



Andy's Story

Andy is an Actor who most notably appears in several episodes of Emmerdale. He is also a trustee of the ACE Centre North and the Back Up Trust.

A very social guy, Andy says he lives a very sporting, active life, the same before as after accident. Before the accident Andy was involved in rugby, football, and swam for Manchester at a competitive level. He also played badminton, squash and table tennis. He is also a Manchester City supporter and regularly travels abroad and describes himself as having used a variety of different disability technologies.

Andy uses an iPhone via the iPortal™ Bluetooth connection with a DX-REM32B Chin Remote.

"Every moment I have been in the wheelchair it's been in constant use. I use the iPhone a lot, and other apps."

In terms of the accident itself, "I was in Goa age 28, and suffered a high level (C4/5) spinal cord injury as a result of diving into the sea from a standing start and bumped my head. I did a 10 month recovery period, 2 months of which I couldn't speak on the ventilator. I am paralysed from the neck down."

Andy has approached the injury very positively, "I have concentrated my life since the injury in terms of trying to work as a volunteer. As a volunteer, I try to assist people to get on with their lives and hopefully to involve myself in schemes which can improve people's lives, independence and outlook with a disability."

Make phone calls, surf the net, type text and join the online world with iPortal's new Accessibility Application which enables joystick or switch or head array control of iPhone and iPod Touch devices.



A chat with Andy about iPortal™ Accessibility

First question, in your experience, what have been some of the major draw backs with traditional assistive technologies??

I have always disliked the way the technology for disabled people have lagged behind. Previously I have been using systems based on old technologies or an old phone which has really been obsolete for a long time. Its nice to be able use the sort of phones that other people can choose.

How frequently have you been able to use your iPortal™?

Constantly! Every moment I have been in the wheelchair it's been in constant use. I use the iPhone a lot, and other apps. My phone goes off very busily. So I am constantly using it if I'm not in meetings or up to other business.

Do you use your iPhone with the iPortal™ and joystick rather than being able to use the touch screen, you know, the Accessibility application?

Yeah, I use the iPhone through the iPortal™ Bluetooth connection and my chin controls.

I don't want to put words in your mouth, but we are keen to question ourselves and just test that there is a need out there for something like this.

I mean for me, it's not a case of putting words into my mouth anyway. For me personally, as you know from the bits I have done in terms of the government schemes I have been involved with, and from the ACE Centre North, I have the honour and privilege of coming across people with a variety of different disabilities, and having different requirements. I have seen a huge potential for this product. You know it's usefulness to the end user is remarkable for me. I have had nothing but positive feedback from the people I have shown. So I think it's fantastic and I think it's got extensive use for people with complex injuries.

What would you say about the practical usefulness of the iPortal™ system?

I will call a spade a spade. It's absolutely fabulous. It gives so much for a busy person like myself, wanting privacy and

independence, business calls, personal calls, I have had real concerns, this has been a revelation for me.

It's a minimum of a telephone, but has the ability to use apps and Facebook itself has given a full holistic view. With its integration into modern technological society, it's brought us right up to speed. Going forwards, its ability to interact with the iPad provides even more of a phenomenal facility. I can see the potential is huge especially for someone like me who wants to read. It's a cost saving device in terms of the technology available and in terms of what page turners represent. It's a hugely affordable, cost effective, easy to access, efficient and you know it's a fun piece of technology. It's comfortable to use and I think it's very well thought out and it's well designed. I think it's excellent. I think it's fantastic. 9½ out of 10.

What type of apps have you tended to use?

I mentioned the reading side of it. I have given that a bash. I am into my sports so I have used a lot of the sports side of things.

I simply read while travelling or otherwise on the iPhone! It has fulfilled my passion for reading which I have been missing for the past five years, at no further cost!

I have tested voice command applications, YouTube, Facebook. Emails have been a regular day to day feature.

Any final comments?

I mean for me personally the one thing I want to do is to thank you guys for the opportunity to show the iPortal™ Accessibility application, but more importantly to take the time and the effort to develop it, because to question the need for this, and it's ability to provide independence, and to change a huge aspect of someone's life, because this phone technology, mobile technology, is such a huge part of day to day life in terms of social inclusion and the ability to communicate.

I think it's fabulous.

For more information about iPortal Accessibility call your nearest sales office, email us or visit our website, www.dynamiccontrols.com

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